

# Sample Op-Ed



Healthy, active children learn better. As a **PARENT** [or your personal or professional connection to issue], I care deeply about our children's health. More than one in three children is at risk for developing diabetes, heart disease, and cancer later in life. Since children spend many of their waking hours and eat up to half their daily calories at school, schools play a critical role in cultivating healthy nutrition and physical activity habits.

That's why I care about our local wellness policy for *[enter name of your local school district]*. The local wellness policy helps to guide our school district's efforts in supporting healthy eating, physical activity, and overall child wellbeing, and can provide the community with a sense of how our district is doing in achieving its wellness goals.

I'm excited to see that the U.S. Department of Agriculture recently updated what school districts should include in their local wellness policy, strengthening implementation and the progress our schools are making to provide healthier school meals, snacks, and beverages. Local wellness policies can also help limit food and beverage marketing in schools and shift school clubs to profitable, healthier fundraisers. They also can help ensure school celebrations and rewards in the classroom support health. They can improve access to clean, drinking water for students throughout the school day, and ensure kids have enough time to eat breakfast and lunch. Further, they can ensure students have safe, reliable, and active transportation options to and from school, and ample opportunities for physical activity and quality physical education.

*[Add any information based on the impact your school district's local wellness policy has had e.g., "Our school district was able to limit food and beverage marketing in our schools thanks to our local wellness policy."]*

I look forward to working with parents, community members, and school officials to update and implement our school district's local wellness policy. Together we can build on the progress our school district has made and improve the school environment to better support learning and our children's health.

*Personalize the opening statement with facts about your community and state. In addition to checking your state and local health departments' websites, consider using information from these sources:*

- *The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's **Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance***
- *The Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's **The State of Obesity** report*